

SPO employee honored, Lou Sidell retires, shore and harbor grants available, First Lady honors student recyclers, blog launched for volunteer managers

**State Planning Office
WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS
Week ending February 1, 2008**

State law assigns four core duties to the State Planning Office that include: 1) conducting continuing economic analysis, including economic forecasting, 2) coordinating the development of the State's economy and energy resources with the conservation of its natural resources; 3) providing technical assistance to towns and regions; and 4) providing technical assistance to the Governor and Legislature by undertaking special studies and plans and preparing policy alternatives.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- Feb 13** Public Hearing: Proposed SPO Amendment to Service Center Rule Chapter 220
3:00 pm - Pine Tree State Arboretum, 153 Hospital Street, Augusta
CONTACT: Donna Bradstreet at 287-5649 or donna.bradstreet@maine.gov
- Feb 14** Land and Water Resources Council
9:30 – 11:00 am – State Planning Office, 184 State Street, Augusta
CONTACT: Aline Lachance at 287-1485 or aline.lachance@maine.gov
- Feb 15** Maine Commission for Community Service
10:00 am – 1:30 pm – Room 105, Cross Office Building, Augusta
CONTACT: Donna Bradstreet at 287-5649 or donna.bradstreet@maine.gov

DIRECTOR'S POLICY AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

Kathleen Leyden to be honored. We are delighted that Kathleen Leyden is to be honored by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. Kathleen was selected to receive the first Susan Snow-Cotter Award for Excellence in Coastal and Marine Resource Management. She'll receive the award at a ceremony scheduled for February 27 in Washington DC. NOAA presents the award annually to honor people for outstanding contributions in helping the nation maintain healthy coastal and ocean resources. Quoting,

You were nominated by people who understand and appreciate the importance of your work to protect and to preserve coastal resources. A distinguished panel of judges selected you for this honor from among an impressive field of nominees whose dedication and hard work epitomize coastal stewardship.

Please join me in congratulating Kathleen on this very distinguished accomplishment!
CONTACT: Jody Harris at 287-5424 or jody.harris@maine.gov

Maine's floodplain management coordinator retires. W. Lou Sidell, Jr. retires this week after a long and highly successful public service career focused on planning and development. Since

1989, Lou has coordinated Maine's Floodplain Management Program at the State Planning Office, which under his direction has steadily improved and expanded floodplain assistance to Maine's 494 municipalities. Among his many accomplishments are refining and streamlining a model municipal flood hazard ordinance used by communities participating in the National Flood Insurance Program and providing extensive training to municipal code officials and planners, along with surveyors and professionals in the banking industry on techniques to reduce flood hazards as well as updates on changes in federal flood regulations and policies.

Lou and his dedicated staff logged thousands of technical assistance calls from towns, developers, and professionals each year. In addition, Lou's experience, insight, and expertise caused him to be in demand nationally, much to Maine's credit. Lou served on the team which developed the first national training program for flood disaster planning and mitigation, and served on several national boards and committees responsible for monitoring and improving flood planning and flood insurance policies. He developed the *Maine Floodplain Management Handbook* and the *Maine Floodplain Mapping Needs Assessment*. Lou has always advocated tirelessly for floodplain management and was a founder of the New England Floodplain Management Association as well as the first person in Maine to be certified as a floodplain manager. With all his experience, we expect that Lou will remain a resource for floodplain managers throughout New England and the US even in his retirement. Please join us in wishing Lou happiness in his retirement. **CONTACT: Tony VanDenBossche at 287-1474 or tony.vandenbossche@maine.gov or George MacDonald at 287-5759 or george.macdonald@maine.gov**

SPO's new web site: On Friday, February 1, SPO will launch its new web site. New to the site are program "spotlights" and featured publications. The spotlight provides new and timely information about projects or program news. The featured publication will highlight just-released reports or studies of broad interest. In addition, information about the various boards and commissions staffed by SPO will now be in one, easy-to-find place. The site will contain all of the current program information including technical assistance manuals, studies, reports, and grant information, with links from the home page to the most frequently visited sites. Visit our new site at: <http://www.maine.gov/spo/>. **CONTACT: Tony VanDenBossche at 287-1474 or tony.vandenbossche@maine.gov**

MAINE COASTAL PROGRAM

Maine program highlighted. The Maine Coastal Protection Initiative is featured in the current issue of the National Oceanographic and Atmosphere Administrations *Coastal Connections* newsletter. Titled "Big-Picture Coastal Conservation Planning," the article is about collaborative partnering with diverse organizations to accomplish strategic land conservation planning goals. The article touches on the values of large collaborative projects, how a partnership culture is achieved, how a diverse partnership can be organized to be effective, the critical role of dedicated staffing support, and enjoying the fruits of collaboration. View the newsletter at: <http://www.csc.noaa.gov/newsletter/>. **CONTACT: Jim Connors at 287-8938 or jim.connors@maine.gov**

Land and Water Resources Council submits annual report. The Land and Water Resources Council has submitted its annual report to the Governor and the Maine Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Natural Resources in accordance with 5 M.R.S.A. §3331, sub-§4. This report describes the council's activities in 2007 and notes activities that the council anticipates in 2008.

In 1993, the Maine Legislature established the Council to advise the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies in the formulation of state policy regarding natural resources management to achieve state environmental, social, and economic objectives. The commissioners of the state natural resource departments comprise the council. To see the report:

<http://www.maine.gov/spo/natural/lwrc/final%202007%20annual%20report.pdf>. **CONTACT:**

Todd Burrowes at 287-1496 or todd.burrowes@maine.gov

Shore and harbor technical assistance grants available. The Maine Coastal Program announces the availability of funds for Shore and Harbor Planning grants. Funds are provided through the state's federal coastal program grant and the submerged lands fund managed by the Maine Department of Conservation.

Shore and harbor grants are available to municipalities in the State's designated coastal zone to promote sound waterfront planning, harbor management, and balanced development of shore and harbor areas to improve marine infrastructure and assure access to the shore. Funds may be used for harbor planning, including harbor management plans, ordinances, and mooring plans; as well as planning studies for public and working access, planning and designing of harbor improvements, developing management plans for municipal facilities in harbors and waterfronts that border upon and may include state-owned submerged lands.

Funds will be awarded on a competitive basis. A 25% match is required. Individual grants may not exceed \$20,000. Potential applicants are encouraged to contact Jim Connors at the Maine Coastal Program to discuss project ideas and consistency with the purposes and guidelines. Grant applications are due by the close of business on Monday, March 3, 2008. **CONTACT: Jim Connors at 287-8938 or jim.connors@maine.gov**

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Maine Recycles Week 2007 concludes with the help of Maine's First Lady. Student winners from the 2007 *Maine Recycles Week* poster competition were welcomed at the Blaine House on January 30, 2008 and awarded certificates by the First Lady for their efforts.

While the state's new recycling campaign materials were on display, the center of attention was appropriately the students. Pictures were taken with Mrs. Baldacci presenting the awards (see accompanying photo of 4th-grader, Leander Andrews, and his teacher, Jessica Porter, from Belfast). The real stars may have been the English Spaniels belonging to the Governor and First Family that had their own way of welcoming the children into their home. No one was in the dog house though and the afternoon was a success.



The award-winning student artwork is featured in the 2008 Maine recycling calendar. Calendars may be ordered online at the www.mainerecycles.com website. **CONTACT: Bruce White at 287-8053 or bruce.white@maine.gov**

Maine Recycles campaign engenders lively discussion at MRRA winter workshop. On January 28, at the annual winter workshop of the Maine Resource Recovery Association (MRRA) held this year in Bangor, some 70 attendees representing over 40 public and private recycling programs were engaged by Jetta Antonakos, coordinator of the State's new media campaign to reinvigorate recycling efforts across Maine, in a positive group discussion of how when and where the campaign can best be used at the local level. Jetta distributed hundreds of the new campaign posters and postcards and reviewed the components of the on line campaign tool kit. **CONTACT: Jetta Antonakos at 287-9074 or jetta.Antonakos@maine.gov**

MAINE COMMISSION FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

Blog launched for Maine volunteer managers. "Conversations From the Field of Volunteer Management" is the focus of the new blog that was launched this week at www.volunteermaine.org. A blog (short for "web log") is a type of journal that allows readers to leave comments and share stories or advice on hot topics. "From the Field" readers will find updates several times each week including new stories, links to resources, and other coffee-break-type conversations from the volunteer management community. Authored by a group of featured bloggers who represent a wide cross-section of Maine's volunteer sector, "From the Field" aims to connect paid or unpaid professionals working to manage volunteers in any field.

Anyone is welcome to view "Conversations From the Field of Volunteer Management" as an interesting read or submit comments at www.volunteermaine.org/blog. Volunteer Maine Leadership Network members and the Maine Commission for Community Service (MCCS) will manage this new blog. **CONTACT: Maryalice Crofton at 287-8931 or service.commission@maine.gov**

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ENERGY INDEPENDENCE AND SECURITY

Heating fuel prices drop again. The Office of Energy Independence and Security's January 28, 2008 survey of home heating oil prices found the current statewide average cash price for No. 2 heating oil to be down by \$.08 since the last week at \$3.22 per gallon and \$1.00 higher than last year at this time. The statewide kerosene price average is down by \$0.05 since last week at \$3.64 per gallon and \$1.01 higher than last year at this time. The propane price survey found the statewide average to be \$2.96 per gallon which is \$0.01 lower than last week and \$0.61 higher than last year at this time.

The price of WTI crude oil is nearly the same as last week at \$90.49 per barrel. This is a major driver of refined product prices, including heating oil. As of January 18, New England (PADD1a) heating oil inventories stood at 9,607 thousand barrels, or 2,032 thousand barrels less than last year at this time. Inventories of heating oil continued to rise and consumers are seeing the benefit in lower prices. Fears of a slowing economy have driven down crude oil prices, but

the simultaneous drop in the dollar has lowered the US consumers' power to purchase oil in a global market place.

The Office conducts a weekly survey of home heating oil, kerosene, and propane prices from November through March. For more information:

<http://www.maineenergyinfo.com/oil/index.html>. **CONTACT: Ian Burnes at 287-8927 or ian.burnes@maine.gov**